

# CHAPTER 1

## FUNDAMENTALS

The maritime prepositioning force (MPF) Marine air-ground task force (MAGTF) can directly support our national maritime strategy of protecting key naval chokepoints and sea lines of communications (SLOCs). An MPF operation includes the airlift of MAGTF and Navy elements, the Navy support element (NSE), and naval coastal warfare (NCW) units with selected equipment into an arrival and assembly area (AAA) to join with equipment and supplies carried aboard maritime prepositioning ships (MPSs).

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### Echelon of Forces

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Maritime prepositioning provides a combatant commander with deployment flexibility and an increased capability to respond rapidly to a crisis or contingency with a credible force. An MPF operation may consist of one ship interacting with a forward-deployed Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU); a maritime prepositioning ships squadron (MPSRON) and a Marine Expeditionary Brigade (MEB) fly-in echelon (FIE); or a Marine Expeditionary Force (MEF) falling in on all three MPSRONs. The MPF is one component of the Marine Corps' rapid response capability triad, which also includes the air contingency MAGTF (ACM) and forward-deployed amphibious forces (AFs).

Each triad component can be used separately or integrated to further enhance a combatant commander's options. An MPF operation is an economy of force measure that allows deployment of an appropriate force if a crisis arises. The MPF offers an augmentation capability for amphibious operations, but is not a substitute due to an inherent lack of forcible entry capability. An MPF operation provides a method to rapidly augment a forward-deployed MAGTF, an ongoing amphibious operation or other joint, multinational or combined force operations.

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### Concept

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An MPF operation extends from marshalling through arrival and assembly of the MAGTF to reconstitution of the MPF. The geographic reach of the operation may vary, but the MPF is inherently a strategic or intertheater capability. Execution involves the following:

- Supporting forces such as the United States Transportation Command (USTRANSCOM), specifically the Military Surface Deployment and Distribution Command (SDDC) or the Air Mobility Command (AMC). The SDDC is formerly the Military Traffic Management Command.
- The host nation (HN) and supported/supporting combatant commander's organizations.
- Other deployment support agencies that the situation may demand.

While an MPF operation is conceptually simple, the strategic dimensions, the number of major commands involved as the force transits from theater to theater (from and to combatant commanders), and the intricacies of the Joint Operation Planning and Execution System (JOPES) make the operation extremely complex. The overlap of phases and geographic separations places heavy demands on command elements (CEs).

The scope of the operation may require activating Navy reserves to conduct the offload and Marine Corps reserves to conduct civil affairs and MAGTF operations. Conflicting demands of deployment and employment will dictate a dynamic planning process that must remain responsive to the current situation. Operational planning must begin with a risk/threat assessment to determine if an MPF operation is the appropriate force deployment option. Some planning factors will be determined late in the decisionmaking process because of the remoteness of the deployment area and uncertainty of the situation. Subsequent operations will impact significantly on

execution planning. Commanders must visualize their concept of operations (CONOPS) ashore to determine their arrival and assembly plans, which determine their deployment plans.

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### The Initiating Directive

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An MPF operation begins with the decision to employ the MPF MAGTF. Typically, a combatant commander—in coordination with the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (CJCS) and the subordinate component commanders, and as directed by the President or Secretary of Defense (SecDef)—initiates an MPF operation and subsequent MAGTF operations. An initiating directive provides essential information. It is issued by and at the discretion of the establishing authority, a common superior commander of the Commander, Maritime Prepositioning Force (CMPF), and MPF MAGTF commander (see ch. 3).

*The CMPF; MPF MAGTF commander; and the commander, Navy support element (CNSE) must quickly determine the requirements and work with higher headquarters to ensure sufficient information and guidance is provided for rapid and efficient execution.* If an MPF operation augments an amphibious operation, the MPF mission and appropriate command relationship guidance is included in the amphibious operation initiating directive.

Planning is continuous, but the execution phase actually begins with assigning a specific mission. Terminating the arrival and assembly phase occurs when all prerequisites in the initiating directive are met and the MAGTF is established ashore. The MAGTF is established ashore when adequate equipment and supplies are offloaded and issued to arriving units; the MAGTF's command and control (C2) capabilities are established; and the MAGTF commander is ready to execute the mission.

The MAGTF commander will report mission readiness to the establishing authority upon termination of the arrival and assembly phase.

Subsequent MAGTF operations ashore are separate from an MPF operation. After the MAGTF mission is completed, the MPF focus shifts to the reconstitution of maritime prepositioning equipment and supplies (MPE/S) aboard the effected MPSRON.

If a separate initiating directive is not published; e.g., during crisis situations or if issued late in the planning process, naval commanders involved in MPF operations will have to act upon information given in alert/warning/execution orders. From this information an initiating directive may be formulated and recommended to the establishing authority for approval and promulgation. These orders often do not contain detailed information specific to the MPF. (App. A is a sample format that contains the “who, what, when, and where” guidance.)

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### Forward Presence and Crisis Response

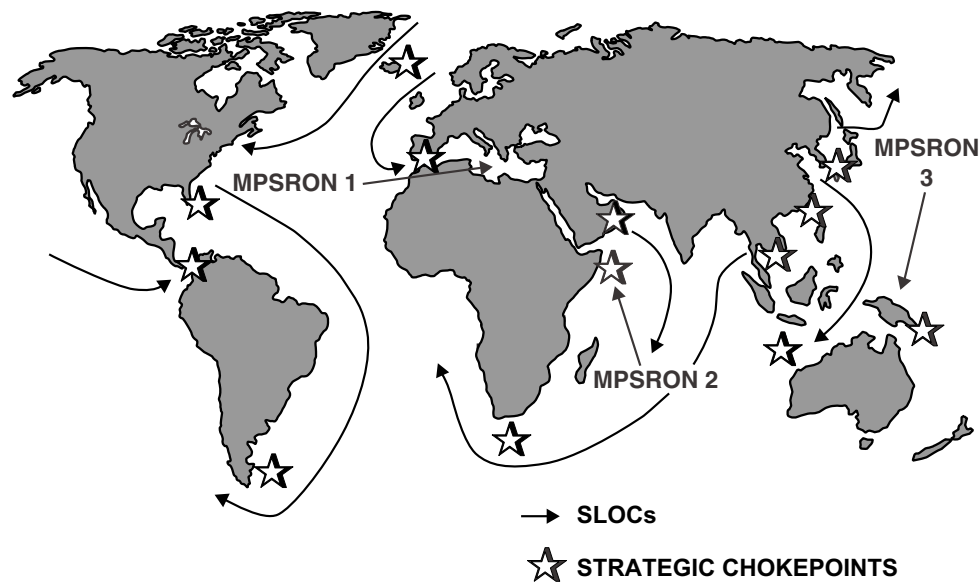
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Development of the naval force structure derives from the national military strategy (NMS), two tenets of which are forward presence and crisis response. Reinforcing US forward-deployed forces and multinational partners and projecting combat power across the range of military operations is an essential ingredient of the NMS.

MPSRONs are strategically based around the globe (see fig. 1-1). Naval forces can link-up with them in an operational area in a matter of days. This capability demonstrates commitment, reinforces alliances, enhances regional stability, promotes US influence and access, and is especially responsive to regional crises or natural disasters.

The MPF is designed to respond independently or with other forces to a variety of regional crises. The MPF provides a quick and credible response to deter an escalation in hostilities or engage decisively if deterrence fails.

The essential contribution of an MPF operation is mobility and flexibility, allowing a quick



**Figure 1-1. MPSRON Operational Locations.**

concentration of forces in a specific area. The MPF permits rapid deployment into secure areas where force introduction is essentially unopposed and is expected to remain so through the arrival and assembly phase. The MPF enables MAGTF employment as follows:

- Augment an amphibious deployment or operation.
- Occupy or augment an advanced base.
- Defend key chokepoints along SLOC.
- Establish a blocking position for offensive and defensive operations.
- Reinforce multinational partners with a credible force before hostilities, and sustain relations with routine exercises and operations.
- Establish a sizable force ashore to enable closure of additional forces.
- Deter potential adversaries by positioning MPSs and alerting Marine and Navy forces (NAVFOR).
- Provide a rapid peacetime response in support of foreign humanitarian assistance and civil support.
- Provide economy of force through reduction of strategic airlift requirements, and reduction or elimination of the need to employ AFs capable of forcible entry to a contingency that does not require such force.

- Augment fleet defense by providing tactical air support from ashore.

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### **Establishing the MPF MAGTF Ashore**

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The essential requirement for an MPF operation is a secure environment that allows for the arrival and offload of ships and aircraft and joining personnel and materials for force standup. To establish the MPF MAGTF ashore, the following conditions are required:

- A secure environment from initiation of strategic deployment through completion of arrival and assembly.
- Adequate strategic airlift and aerial tanker support.
- Adequate offload forces; i.e., MAGTF and NSE.
- Sufficient airfield space for Marine Corps tactical aircraft, operational support airlift, AMC aircraft and civil reserve air fleet (CRAF) operations, and throughput capability to support the intended air-flow.
- An ample port and/or beach area for timely offload and throughput. The port must have sufficient water depth, overhead clearance, and maneuver room to admit MPSs. Beaches and

approaches ship-to-shore (STS) must be evaluated for hydrographic support and swept for mines and other hazards.

- A suitable transportation network between the port and/or beach, airfields, and assembly areas to permit timely arrival and assembly of airlifted units with sealifted equipment and supplies. This may include railroads, barge traffic, and pipelines.
- Adequate force protection capabilities to meet any potential threat in the AAA.

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## NMS

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MPF is a key asset in the NMS by providing regional focus, an adaptive planning capability; i.e., tailoring forces for a particular circumstance, and force presence options. Through regional focus, each MPSRON and the forces from the associated MEF can respond worldwide, but remain especially responsive to the theaters that are designated as those of a possible major theater war (MTW) or small scale contingencies (SSCs) or those supported by operation plans (OPLANs) or contingency plans (CONPLANs).

The purpose of this adaptive planning process is to provide leaders with a range of preplanned options to clearly demonstrate US resolve, deter potential adversaries, and deploy and employ forces to fight and win, quickly and decisively. As a military component of these options, the MPF provides a combatant commander with a wide range of capabilities to size the force for a particular mission.

Force presence options exist because the MPSRONs are forward-deployed and serve as an ever-present reminder of US capability and resolve. When teamed with amphibious or other forward-deployed naval forces, the MPF can enhance a force presence with potent complementary capabilities easily recognized by a potential adversary.

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## Rapid Response

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The goal of an MPF operation is to establish a MAGTF ashore as rapidly as possible and for it

to be fully operational within 10 days or less following initiation of the offload. Achieving this goal requires positioning the MPF in areas of concern so that the chief constraint on force deployment is airlift, not sealift closure.

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## Flexible Command Relationships

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The establishing authority will promulgate command and supporting/supported relationships. Relationships should be as consistent as possible to ensure continuity and reduce potential confusion. However, relationships must be flexible to support all MPF phases and respond to new requirements.

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## Sustainment of the MPF

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Sustainment of the MAGTF comes from a combination of prepositioned and airlifted materiel. An MPF MEB is a capable force of Marines, Navy, and naval support personnel that, using a full MPSRON, can be sustained for 30 days. The MAGTF may be sustained ashore longer or less depending on the size of the force, the number of MPSRONs supporting that force, and the following variables:

- Inclusion of an aviation logistics support ship (T-AVB).
- Follow-up shipping.
- SLOCs length.
- Host-nation support (HNS).

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## Types of MPF Operations

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### Independent

Independent operations are those where the MPF MAGTF becomes part of a joint task force (JTF) that involves no other Marine Corps forces (MARFOR) or those where the MPF as the JTF supports allies. The key identifier is that the MPF

MAGTF remains an independent entity that is not subsumed into another MARFOR, although the MPF MAGTF commander may be dual designated as the MARFOR commander in the area of operations (AO).

## Augmentation

Augmentation, as defined in Joint Publication (JP) 1-02, *Department of Defense Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms*, is the transfer of forces to the operational control of a supported commander during execution of an operation. MPF augmentation operations are those where the MPF MAGTF supports an existing MARFOR or AF.

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## Phases

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### Planning

The planning phase begins upon receipt of the alert/warning order and is characterized by two planning methodologies: deliberate planning and crisis action planning (CAP). Deliberate planning is ongoing, preparing for future, hypothetical military operations. CAP is conducted to respond to present situations that might require a US military response (see ch. 5).

### Marshalling

Units organize and complete final preparations to deploy, including preparing personnel and equipment, moving to an aerial port of embarkation (APOE), staging, and loading aboard aircraft. The marshalling phase begins on arrival of the first unit at a designated marshalling point and ends on departure of the last unit from a departure airfield (see ch. 6).

### Movement

The movement phase entails moving forces by air and sea to the AAA. It begins on lift-off of the first aircraft from the departure airfield or

when the first MPF ship transits to the AAA. This phase ends when the last FIE aircraft arrives in the AAA and the last ship arrives at the offload point.

## Arrival and Assembly

The arrival and assembly phase begins on arrival of the first MPF ship or first aircraft of the main body at the designated AAA. This phase ends when adequate MPE/S are offloaded and issued to awaiting units, C2 is established, and the MAGTF commander reports that all essential MAGTF elements of the MPF are combat-ready (see ch. 7). The arrival and assembly phase includes the following:

- Prepare the AAA.
- Receive MAGTF, US Navy (USN), and US Coast Guard (USCG) personnel and equipment at nearby airfields.
- Coordinate arrival and offload of equipment and supplies from MPSs.
- Issue MPE/S to arriving units.
- Provide local force protection for arrival and assembly.
- Establish the MAGTF's combat capability (force standup).
- Prepare the MAGTF mission; e.g., moving the MAGTF to the tactical assembly area (TAA) or the line of departure (LD).

## Reconstitution

The MPSRON is methodically restored to its original strength or properties and full operational capability. Reconstitution is conducted as rapidly as possible after the MAGTF completes its mission (see ch. 8).

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## Force Protection

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Force protection impacts on employment, CONOPS, planning, movement of forces, and all activities in the AAA (see ch. 10).

# CHAPTER 2

## AUTHORITIES

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### President or SecDef's Guidance

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- Provide a mission statement to the joint staff (JS).
- Direct augmentation of an amphibious deployment or operation.
- Provide general guidance/approval of rules of engagement (ROE).
- Consider requests for mobilization and activation of reserves after consulting with JS and Service chiefs.
- Direct support from other departments and agencies.
- Provide an initial decision to deploy or employ forces.

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### CJCS

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As the principal military advisor to the President and SecDef, the CJCS provides comments and recommendations on military options and forces available, including MPF employment, as recommended by a combatant commander. Responsibilities follow:

- Issue appropriate orders to combatant commanders in accordance with the crisis action system/JOPEs.
- Task and coordinate Services, subordinate Department of Defense (DOD) agencies and appropriate unified commands; e.g., USTRANSCOM.
- Recommend interdepartmental linkages between operational forces and support agencies.
- Coordinate and provide advice to the President or SecDef on ROE.
- Recommend to the President or SecDef activating reserves as required; e.g., to augment MAGTF, NSE, and NCW units.
- Supervise interunified command coordination.

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### Military Services

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- Administers, equips, trains, and supports forces provided to the unified commands.
- Supports Service components.
- Activates reserves as directed by the President or SecDef.
- Exercises administrative control (ADCON) of forces through Service components.

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### Combatant Commanders

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An MPF operation is conducted under the command of a combatant commander. Combatant command (command authority) (COCOM) is the authority of a combatant commander to perform those functions of command over assigned forces involving organizing and employing commands and forces; assigning tasks; designating objectives; and giving authoritative direction over all aspects of military operations, joint training, and logistics to accomplish assigned missions. Direct communication between supported/supporting combatant commanders is essential for clear understanding of what is required and what each contributes.

### Supported Combatant Commander

A supported combatant commander is the commander in whose area of responsibility (AOR) the operation will take place. Responsibilities follow:

- Determine military options and force requirements.
- Execute the President- or SecDef-issued orders.
- Coordinate and facilitate HNS.
- Issue specific ROE within the AOR.
- Coordinate overall security and protection of assigned forces.
- Allocate resources.
- Coordinate with Commander, USTRANSCOM and supporting agencies and commands.

- Designate the commander responsible for conducting the MPF operation with Marine and Navy Service component commanders.
- Determine, in broad terms, where the MPF operation is to occur.

### Supporting Combatant Commander

A supporting combatant commander provides personnel, equipment, supplies, and services to a supported combatant commander. Responsibilities follow:

- Provide employment options input to the supported combatant commander.
- Provide forces and/or support as required.
- Pass HNS requirements of the MPF to a supported combatant commander if appropriate.
- Issue specific ROE within their assigned AOR.
- Provide and coordinate force protection for the MPF and supporting forces in their assigned AOR.
- Coordinate allocating resources with the supported combatant commander and the Commander, USTRANSCOM.
- Provide for exchange and support of liaison linkages with the supported combatant commander.

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### Joint Force Commander

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Joint force commander (JFC) is a general term applied to a combatant commander, subunified commander, or joint task force commander authorized to exercise combatant command (command authority) or operational control over a joint force. (JP 1-02).

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### Commander, Marine Corps Forces

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The Commander, Marine Corps forces (COMMARFOR) is the Service component commander to a JFC. COMMARFOR responsibilities follow (per JFC direction):

- Provide recommendations on Marine forces employment.
- Coordinate planning efforts.
- Provide deployment support, such as coordinating with Commander, USTRANSCOM and other supporting commands.

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### Fleet Commander or Commander, Naval Forces

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At the direction of the combatant commander, the fleet commander or the commander, naval forces recommends fleet employment options to the combatant commander and designates and activates supporting naval forces.

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### Subordinate Naval Forces Type Commanders

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Type commanders (TYCOMs) are specific administrative commands that prepare forces for operations. MARFOR commanders function as TYCOMs. Unlike Navy TYCOMs, however, they retain an operational capability and are subject to the operational chain of command of the fleet commander.

### Commanders, MARFORs

The Commander, Marine Corps Forces, Atlantic (COMMARFORLANT), and Commander, Marine Corps Forces, Pacific (COMMARFORPAC), provide administrative support to train and deploy their MEFs.

### Commanders, Naval Surface Forces

The Commander, Naval Surface Force, Atlantic (COMNAVSURFLANT) or Commander, Naval Surface Force, Pacific (COMNAVSURFPAC) allocates forces as follows:

- Commander, amphibious group.
- Naval beach group (NBG) and its subordinate units.
- NCW group and its subordinate units.

### Commander, Naval Air Forces

The Commander, Naval Air Force, Atlantic or the Commander, Naval Air Force, Pacific provides support of Marine aviation to include ammunition.

### Commander, Military Sealift Command

The Commander, Military Sealift Command (COMSC) provides administrative direction and

support of the MPSRON through close coordination with civilian operating companies to satisfy extraordinary requirements generated by operational considerations. The COMSC also exercises ADCON via Military Sealift Command (MSC) area commanders to coordinate logistics and administrative support for MPSRONs (personnel training, material readiness, doctrine, ship characteristics, and budget). The COMSC also provides deployment support.

### **Commander, Naval Construction Forces Command**

The Commander, Naval Construction Forces Command allocates the naval construction regiment (NCR), naval mobile construction battalions (NMCBs), and underwater construction teams (UCTs).

### **Commander, Naval Expeditionary Logistics Support Force**

The Commander, Naval Expeditionary Logistics Support Force allocates forces such as the Navy cargo handling and port group (NAVCHAPGRU).

### **Commanding Officer, Fleet Hospital Support Office**

The Fleet Hospital (FH) Support Office facilitates the call-up of personnel and support required to establish the FH in the AO.

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## **Operational Commanders**

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### **Commanding General, MEF**

- Plan, execute, and support MAGTF operations.
- Establish postures of units and elements for MPF deployment. Readiness, preparation, and support of units and elements are the responsibility of the parent division, wing, force service support group (FSSG) or other major subordinate commands as the MEF commander may designate.

- Liaison with Commander, USTRANSCOM and other supporting commanders.
- Determine and assign the appropriate MAGTF.
- On receipt of warning or alert order, shift OPCON of assigned forces to the MAGTF.
- Review the MAGTF commander's proposed course of action (COA), commander's estimate, CONOPS, and employment and deployment plans.
- Activates the force movement control center (FMCC).
- Direct activation of the logistics movement control centers (LMCCs) and other movement control organizations.
- Coordinate force deployment and sustainment provided to the MAGTF commander by external MEF commands and agencies. This includes the airlift requirements of naval elements supporting the MAGTF; e.g., NSE or NCW. Sequencing naval support units must be phased into the AAA to support the force standup of the MAGTF. The MAGTF commander must decide the appropriate deployment window for these units. Normally, NSE and NCW units are part of the advance party.
- Provide liaison to external commands and agencies.
- Provide public affairs guidance.
- Evaluate existing plans to determine if they can serve as a base point; identify units available for deployment tasking.
- Assist the MAGTF commander with review of applicable deployment database development guidance provided by higher headquarters.
- Respond to direction from higher headquarters to plan task organization and establish or revise the deployment database.
- Assist the MAGTF commander in analysis of time-phased force and deployment data (TPFDD) plans for COA development.
- Participate, as directed, in the COA development process of a supported combatant commander.
- Direct and/or coordinate deployment database development to include TPFDD and prioritization of forces/sustainment.



- Determine mode and source of transportation for all movement segments in the TPFDD (origin to port of embarkation [POE], POE to port of debarkation [POD], POD to destination) for each COA.
- Direct and coordinate preliminary determination of quantities of basic prescribed loads and accompanying supplies, and initiate preparations for release of war reserve material through the war reserve system (WRS).
- Coordinate Marine Corps base (MCB) and Marine Corps air station (MCAS) support to deploying MPF elements.

### Numbered Fleet Commanders

Numbered fleet commanders (2d, 3d, 5th, 6th, and 7th fleets) perform the following tasks at the direction of JFC, Service or functional component commander or other appropriate authority:

- Designate the CMPF.
- Exercise OPCODE over assigned NAVFOR.
- Identify additional support requirements to higher authority.
- Task-organize NAVFOR.
- Request, coordinate, and direct support forces.
- Provide force protection for NAVFOR and the MPSRON.

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## Supporting Organizations

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### USTRANSCOM

This command coordinates strategic deployment of forces assigned to or in support of the unified commander, including coordinating en route aerial refueling of MAGTF self-deploying aircraft and strategic airlift.

### AMC

The AMC may provide en route aerial refueling for the MAGTF's fixed-wing (FW) self-deploying aircraft. The Marine aircraft wing (MAW) Self-Deploying Aircraft Control Center (SDACC) will coordinate en route aerial refueling with the AMC and Air Combat Command.

### MSC

The MSC is responsible for ADCON and support of MPSRONS.

### SDDC

The SDDC coordinates common user surface transportation within the continental United States (CONUS) and common user ports worldwide.

### Supporting Establishments

Marine Corps and Navy supporting and shore establishments support deployment of forces as directed and/or coordinated by appropriate authority.

The Marine Corps Logistics Command (MARCORLOGCOM), Albany, GA has primary responsibility for the material readiness of maritime prepositioned material before its commitment in an MPF operation. This includes contract maintenance and logistics support of MPE/S aboard the MPSRON and providing a technical assistance and advisory team (TAAT) for transitional assistance to employing forces. MARCORLOGCOM has delegated Blount Island Command (BICmd) as the executive agent for MPF maintenance operations.